

October 25, 2012

Dear 5th Grade Parents/Guardians,

Our annual Outdoor Education experience will be held at the Lorado Taft Field Center located in Oregon, Illinois (approximately 2 hours from Holmes). We will leave school at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 27 and return to school by 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 28. The attached Parent Letter provides more information about the Outdoor Education program at Lorado Taft. Also attached is a suggested packing list. Your child will need to dress for the weather, so you will want to check the weather forecast as the trip date approaches. If your child has not stayed overnight away from you before, you might want to have a 'practice' sleepover before your child goes on the Outdoor Ed field trip.

The cost of this field trip is \$75. There are several payment options. You can pay by check payable to District 97. You can also pay online. If you choose this option, please make sure you indicate that your payment is for the 5th grade Outdoor Education field trip. You can also pay in installments if that is more convenient. We don't want financial constraints to prevent any of our 5th graders from attending this field trip. Please contact your child's homeroom teacher if you are unable to pay the full amount at this time so that we can discuss options. Any contributions to the field trip scholarship fund are appreciated.

Each child attending the field trip must have a fully completed health form on file with Lorado Taft two weeks prior to our trip. Forms were distributed several weeks ago. **If your child hasn't yet turned in a health form, please turn it in by Wednesday, October 31, at the latest.**

We will need at least 5 men and 5 women to chaperone this trip. Chaperones will be responsible for supervising groups during the day, and will also sleep in the dorms with the students overnight. Please contact your child's homeroom teacher if you are interested in chaperoning this field trip.

Please complete the permission slip and return it to your child's homeroom teacher before November 9.

Outdoor Education Field Trip Permission Slip - Due November 9

I give my child _____ permission to attend the Outdoor Education program at Lorado Taft Field Center on November 27-28, 2012.

Payment of \$75 is (circle one): enclosed paid online will be paid in installments

A field trip scholarship fund contribution is enclosed _____

Notes (special diet, etc.): _____

Parent Signature: _____

WHAT TO BRING

This list is intended as a suggestion. It is important to remember the variations in climate that exist during the school year. Fall temperatures range from highs in the eighties and lows in the twenties after the first frost. Winter temperatures can be very cold and there is often snow on the ground. Spring is a mixed bag of hot and cold weather and it rains often. With this in mind, send only old clothes.

CLOTHING

- _____ 2 pairs closed-toe, good walking shoes--No Sandals of any kind
- _____ 1 pair long pants per day
- No shorts
- _____ 1 shirt per day
- _____ jacket/sweater/sweatshirt
- _____ rain jacket
- _____ several pairs of socks
- _____ pajamas
- _____ underwear

PERSONAL ITEMS

- _____ comb or brush
- _____ toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant)
- _____ towel & washcloth
- _____ sleeping bag or bedroll
- _____ pillowcase (pillow is provided)
- _____ plastic bag for dirty clothes
- _____ water bottle
- _____ sunscreen— even in the winter
- _____ insect repellent

OPTIONAL

- _____ camera and film
- or one-time-use camera
- (clearly marked with name & school)
- _____ pen and paper
- _____ day pack
- _____ bandanna

WINTER ITEMS

- _____ Warm, layered clothing
- _____ Snowsuit or snow pants
- _____ Long underwear
- _____ Wool socks / warm socks
- _____ Warm boots
- _____ Mittens / Gloves
- _____ Hat
- _____ Scarf
- _____ Handkerchief or Kleenex

PLEASE DO NOT BRING

candy, gum, snacks, knives, fireworks, radios, electronic games, cell phones, pagers

LETTER TO PARENTS

The field trip will leave school at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 27 and return to school at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 28.

- Purpose** The purpose of the Outdoor Education Program at Taft is to teach an appreciation, understanding, and awareness of the natural community by studying and interacting with the natural world. Underlying the trip is the belief that learning is not restricted to the classroom, learning is also found in the world around us. Through the combination of related, multi-disciplinary activities and an interaction with the natural world, it is hoped that students will not only acquire new knowledge, but also will come to appreciate this philosophy.
- Instruction** A variety of activities and projects are prepared by school and Taft staff. The activities will take advantage of the natural surroundings of the area using the environment as a natural stimulus for learning. Activities will include the areas of reading and language arts, science, health, social studies and physical education.
- Staff** Each school is assigned a specialist to work with school staff to design a program that meets the student's needs. Classes are taught by Coordinators and Education Program Specialists from Northern Illinois University and school staff.
- Facility** Taft Campus is located just off of Highway 64 near Oregon, Illinois. The scenic campus is located next to the Rock River and adjacent to Lowden State Park. Students will sleep dormitory style in bunk beds with boys and girls housed in separate rooms or buildings. Meals are served family style in the dining hall.
- Supervision** School staff or adult chaperones will assume the responsibility for supervision and discipline. The ratio of adults to students is approximately 1 to 10.
- Health** Taft Campus employs a nurse who is on site from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM. She will package medications and dispense them at morning and noon meals. School personnel will dispense evening medications. All students are required to have a completed and signed health form before they can participate in the program. Taft Campus carries a basic accident and illness insurance policy on all participants. In addition, Taft staff are trained in First Aid and CPR.
- Accessibility** Taft Campus has handicapped accessible dorms and buildings. The school staff will need to make Taft aware of limitations so accommodations can be made.
- Telephones** Students will not have access to a telephone during their visit. Please do not send a cell phone with your child. In the event of an emergency, a message can be delivered to school staff.

Security There is a staff member on site in a security role throughout the school's visit as well as maintenance personnel available to take care of any emergencies in the evenings.

Packing Students will need to dress for the weather since we will be outside. Pack only old clothes and shoes. New clothes may be ruined by heavy outdoor use. Students need to bring a sleeping bag or bedroll. A pillow is provided. Refer to the packing list for specific items.

